Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-88-057
Thursday
24 March 1988

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Cuba

Havana Reports on Angola Withdrawal Terms

FL231833 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] The JOURNAL DE ANGOLA, official organ of the MPLA-PT [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola—Party of Labor], reports that according to an accredited source, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker accepted Angola's basic conditions, which are: the immediate withdrawal of regular South African troops from Angolan territory, the cessation of U.S. and South African military support to the UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] bandits, the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 435-78 on the independence of Namibia, and the withdrawal of Cuban internationalists only after compliance with this plan.

Crocker also holds South Africa responsible for having contributed, with its compromising attitude, to the failure of the so-called U.S. constructive policy in Africa.

Alarcon Discusses U.S. Elections, C.A.

FL232247 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1904 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Relations with Mexico are not only excellent in terms of educational-cultural cooperation, but also in the economic and political areas. This was stated by Vice Foreign Minister Ricardo Alarcon today when he met, at the Foreign Ministry, with participants of the first meeting of rectors at Cuban and Mexican higher education centers. The meeting has been taking place since Monday at the University of Havana.

Alarcon hailed the close ties of friendship and solidarity between the two nations, particularly the disinterested support Mexico has given Cuba since the triumph of our revolution, despite U.S. pressures. He also briefed the conferees on the Central American situation, the political crisis in Panama, the U.S. presidential elections, and other topics.

CSSR Defense Minister Continues Visit

Tours Old Havana

FL232203 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Army General Milan Vaclavik, member of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee and national defense minister of the brother country of Czechoslovakia, has toured the historical section of Havana.

During his visit to the Havana Museum, he was given a brief summary of Cuban history, which is preserved in that cultural center, from colonial times to our liberation epic begun in 1868, and the ultimate triumph of the revolution.

The distinguished visitor was accompanied by Division General Rogelio Acevedo Gonzalez, member of the PCC Central Committee and chief of the FAR Central Political Directorate. He was also informed on the life and works of the main leaders of our independence struggles: Marti, Gomez, and Maceo.

Upon concluding the tour, he enjoyed an entertaining cultural show performed by Cuban pioneers who in turn were congratulated by the visitors.

Visits Isle of Youth

FL240045 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] Army General Milan Vaclavik, minister of national defense of the CSSR, has toured the Isle of Youth in the company of Senen Casas, alternate member of the PCC Politburo and first vice minister of the FAR.

The Nicaraguan students of the Carlos Fonseca Amador rural school gave the defense minister an enthusiastic welcome. In his visit to the school, he learned how these teenagers from Sandino's homeland live and study. Vaclavik was able to enjoy typical dances and songs and later spoke to the students about their responsibility in obtaining an education so they can serve their country.

Vaclavik and his delegation also visited the old Model Prison, which is today a national monument. He was briefed there about the prison stay of Fidel and the others who attacked the Moncada barracks.

Rodriguez Receives PDRY Industry Minister

FL222209 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Yesterday in Havana, Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez received 'Abdallah Muhammad 'Uthman, minister of industry, commerce, and supply of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen [PDRY]. The two reviewed the current state of bilateral economic and commercial relations.

The visiting official had previously met with Alejandro Roca, Cuban minister of the food industry.

Rodriguez Llompart Received by Alfonsin

FL232341 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1910 GMT 23 Mar 88 txt

[Text] Argentine head of state Raul Alfonsin today received Hector Rodriguez Llompart, minister president of the National Bank of Cuba, at Government House. They reviewed topics of mutual interest. Alfonsin sent greetings to Commander in Chief Fidel Castro during the exchange.

This meeting with Alfonsin was the culmination of the Cuban delegation's activities in Argentina. Also present was Cuban Ambassador Santiago Diaz. Rodriguez Llompart earlier held talks with Argentine Economy Minister Juan Vital Sourrouille and with other officials in the economic area to examine bilateral relations.

Raul Castro, Espin Attend Relative's Burial

FL222139 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Report from Santiago de Cuba by Carlos Sanabria Marrero]

[Text] The burial of Jose Espin, father of Comrade Vilma Espin Guillois, member of the PCC Politburo and president of the Federation of Cuban Women, took place this morning in Santiago de Cuba.

Also present at the burial were Army General Raul Castro, Armando Hart, and Esteban Lazo, all members of the PCC Politburo, and other leaders and representatives of the organs and organizations of Santiago de Cuba Province.

Jose Espin was 86 years old when he passed away. An untiring fighter, his San Geronimo house between Calvario and (Carniceria) served as headquarters during Santiago's armed uprising on 30 November 1956.

At the Santa Efigenia Cemetery, a national monument, Comrade Carlos Sarabia Hernandez, member of the provincial PCC committee and a fellow underground fighter, emphasized Jose Espin's solid revolutionary principles, his consistent attitude, and his example as a father, characteristics which forever earned him the love and respect of his relatives and friends in this heroic city where he always lived.

Raul Castro and Vilma Espin toured the cemetery afterward. They visited the graves of several revolutionaries who fell here in Santiago de Cuba during the clandestine struggle, including that of Frank Pais Garcia. Finally, they visited the mausoleum containing the remains of our national hero, Jose Marti.

Crombet Finds Shortcomings in Pinar del Rio

FL222257 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1932 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Jaime Crombet, secretary of the PCC Central Committee, has visited several installations in Pinar del Rio Province. He was accompanied in his tour by Fidel Ramos Perera, member of the PCC Central Committee and party first secretary in the province. Crombet acknowledged progress in services to the population and in commerce and gastronomy since the beginning, in 1987, of a special program with this objective in mind. However, he noted, a great deal remains to be done.

During his tour, Crombet discussed difficulties in the parallel market, lack of supplies for the cafeteria network, shortages in the spare parts required to repair refrigerators, and slow service in the industrial products and food markets. The party leader stressed that young people who are honest and revolutionary and those demobilized from the FAR and the Interior Ministry, need to get involved in service work.

Radio Cited on Penal Law Applications

FL181544 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1523 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] The penal law is applicable to all crimes committed on national territory or on board Cuban ships and planes, wherever they may be, except for specific provisions established by the treaties signed by the Republic of Cuba. Likewise, the penal law is applicable to crimes against natural and living resources above and below the seabed in the waters adjoining the coastline outside of the territorial waters to the limit fixed by law.

Cuban penal law is also applicable to Cubans and non-citizens residing in Cuba who commit a crime abroad if they are in our country or are extradited. The same goes for Cubans who commit a crime abroad and are turned over to Cuba for trial in compliance with treaties signed by the Republic of Cuba.

Caricom

Leaders Urged To Take Stand on Waste Dumping

FL232222 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Conservationists are calling on Caribbean leaders to take a stand on dumping of foreign waste in the region. Concern was triggered by the recent attempt to dump waste from the American city of Philadelphia into dump sites in Haiti.

The Caribbean Conservation Association has formally asked the heads of government of the 13-nation Caribbean Community to take a stand on the problem at their annual meeting in Antigua this July.

Barbados

British Mission To Strengthen Commercial Ties

FL232215 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] A British trade mission is in Barbados following visits to Puerto Rico and Jamaica. Britain is making a new effort to strengthen commercial ties in the region. The delegation arrived in Barbados yesterday after spending 5 days each in Jamaica and Puerto Rico.

The organizer of the mission, (Tony Monahan), conceded that the more expensive British pound is making it difficult to sell British products overseas, particularly in the Caribbean, where Britain has been losing out to U.S. exporters. Nevertheless, in Jamaica one agreement was signed with the private sector regarding purchase of building materials and at least two more deals are said to be forthcoming.

Dominican Republic

Doctors in State-Owned Hospitals Strike

FL232209 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Doctors in state-owned hospitals in the Dominican Republic are in the second day of a 3-day strike for higher pay.

The strike has affected all government-owned hospitals in the country where doctors are demanding a 100-percent raise in the minimum wage. The government has already said it cannot afford such an increase.

Haiti

Bomb Explosion, Searches in Capital Reported

FL240227 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Excerpts] A bomb exploded yesterday evening at around 1930 under the Croix des Missions bridge. Fortunately, it caused no serious damage. According to statements we obtained, the explosion caused a big noise and there were flames. A few houses shook. One of our reporters went to the scene, and here are the statements he obtained:

[Begin recording] [Reporter (Smith Barthelus)] Listen, what's your name?

[(Gantz)] My name is (Gantz).

[(Barthelus)] Tell me exactly what happened here a while ago.

[(Gantz)] OK, well, at about 1915, just a while ago, there was an explosion in Croix des Missions. I can't tell you what it was. There was an explosion and a big fire, but I can't tell you what kind of a fire, whether it was rubber burning or what.

[(Barthelus)] Was there fire, or smoke?

[(Gantz)] Not just smoke—fire. There was both smoke and fire. But that is all I can tell you about it. [passage omitted] [end recording] [passage omitted]

That was the first person to be interviewed by (Smith Barthelus). Here is another:

[Begin recording] [(Barthelus)] Did you hear the noise?

[Unidentified speaker] Yes.

[(Barthelus)] What kind of noise was it?

[Speaker] It sounded like when a transformer blows. I realized it wasn't a transformer when I noticed that we still had lights. So then I rushed outside and saw the earth shaking and lots of smoke coming from under the bridge. [passage omitted]

[(Barthelus)] Do you think it was a firecracker, or a gunshot, or....

[Speaker, interrupting] As I told you, I thought about a transformer, because when they blow, they make lots of noise. But when we rushed out and saw all the lights on, we knew it couldn't have been a transformer blowing. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The police went to the scene. Afterward, there were searches in the capital to try to put a stop to criminal acts of this nature.

Netherlands Antilles

Prime Minister Tenders Government Resignation

FL232231 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Prime Minister Don Martina, of the Netherlands Antilles, has tendered his government's resignation to the governor, Rene Romer. The Workers Party has withdrawn its support to the Cabinet, disagreeing with policies planned by Prime Minister Martina which would mean the loss of 1,600 public employees' jobs if enacted. The government needed the Workers Party votes in parliament to enact the legislation.

Greek Embassy Occupied; Entry, Exit Denied

PA230328 Mexico City XHTV Television in Spanish 0255 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] The Greek Embassy in Mexico City was taken over this morning by members of the 2 October Movement. Thirty-two followers are demanding the release of their leader, Francisco de la Cruz.

De la Cruz has been in jail in this city for 7 years. His followers have enough food for at least 15 days, and they demand De la Cruz' release from jail. The takeover was carried out peacefully, but embassy personnel are not being allowed to enter or leave the building.

Debt Rescheduling Agreement Reached With Japan

OW221159 Tokyo KYODO in English 1127 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Tokyo, March 22 KYODO—Japan has agreed with Mexico on the second rescheduling of its debts with the Latin American nation totaling some 48.9 billion yen, the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday.

Notes on the debt relief following the first one in fiscal 1985 that ended in March 1984 were exchanged in Mexico City earlier in the day.

The amount comprises about 48 billion yen which Mexico borrowed from the Governmental Export-Import Bank of Japan and 900 million yen from the Governmental Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund, officials said.

Petricioli Says $1.1 Billion To Go to Reserves

PA240129 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 1955 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Mexico's agreement with the IMF on expanded facilities [convenio de facilidad ampliada], which was signed in mid-1986, has expired. Finance Secretary Gustavo Petricioli revealed that there are no more obligations [candados] with the IMF. Petricioli made these statements in Caracas before leaving for Mexico City. He participated in the 29th annual assembly of the IDB.

Petricioli also explained that the $1.1 billion Mexico will receive on 30 March, which is part of the financial package negotiated at the end of 1986 and 1987, will become part of Mexico's reserves. Thus, the level of reserves will serve as a basic support for the Economic Solidarity Pact. In other words, monetary stability will forestall inflation. In addition, the stabilization program requires a stable rate of exchange.

Mexico will eventually be able to seek new agreements that will be favorable to our country and lead to a decrease in the foreign debt and lower interest payments.

Briefs

Pemex Reports 1987 Gains

Pemex Director Francisco Rojas Gutierrez said, in a review of the work completed in 1987, that daily exports averaged 1.345 million barrels, which amounted to $7.833 billion. This figure is $301 million higher than for 1986. He also said Mexico will supply 53,144 barrels of crude oil daily to the countries belonging to the San Jose accord. [Summary] [*PA222053 Mexico City EL NACIONAL in Spanish 16 Mar 88 p 4*]

Guatemala

URNG Proposes Truce During Holy Week

PA231455 Paris AFP in Spanish 0505 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Guatemala City, 22 Mar (AFP)—Today Bishop Rodolfo Quezada, president of the National Reconciliation Commission (CRN), said that the Guatemalan guerrillas have asked the government for a truce during Holy Week.

The prelate said the proposal is contained in a letter the rebels sent to the CRN this week.

Bishop Quezada explained that if the Guatemalan Government accepts the URNG proposal, the truce would last between 0000 on 27 March and 2400 on 3 April.

The CRN and Red Cross delegates could supervise compliance with the truce, the bishop noted.

The rebels recently asked for the mediation of the CRN and Metropolitan Archbishop Prospero Penados for the resumption of the talks with the government. The talks were interrupted shortly after they began in October in Spain.

Czechoslovak 'Tourists' Accused of Espionage

PA232010 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 1230 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] This afternoon National Defense Minister General Hector Alejandro Gramajo confirmed that Czechoslovak tourists were carrying out activities against the law:

[Begin Gramajo recording] We are turning this case over to the Foreign Ministry so it can take action. No embassy has apparently yet taken over the case, as no statement has been issued from the nearest CSSR embassies, which are located in Mexico and Nicaragua. However, we know this case involves various crimes against the country's immigration and foreigners law, communications laws, and contraband laws—because they neglected to declare a lot of material. The crime of military espionage is the one that interests us the most. [end recording]

Gramajo gave details about the CSSR political and military actions in our country:

[Begin Gramajo recording] We are making this charge because they cannot present an alleged sponsoring agency for their trip, despite spending a lot of money, especially on expensive equipment. We are also basing the charge of military espionage on their tremendous capacity for communications via satellite. Proof of this is the mere fact that they can park their car anywhere and by pushing a button inside it, information can be heard from a great distance. They have very sophisticated communications equipment. We also have copies of film shot from a plane. In other words, they were violating Guatemalan airspace with their plane. They were also carrying documents with people's names that have many political and military implications. This case is well founded. There is no problem. [end recording]

Cerezo Comments

PA232020 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1828 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Guatemala City, 23 Mar (DPA)—Today Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo said that the problem of the five Czechoslovaks who were arrested by the Guatemalan Army in northern Guatemala and accused of spying will be resolved through diplomatic and political channels.

Prague announced a protest over the arrests, rejecting the espionage charges and demanding the Czechoslovaks' release. However, President Cerezo said that the protest has not been received.

Guatemala and Czechoslovakia do not have diplomatic relations, although they do have commercial ties. The nearest CSSR embassies to Guatemala are located in Mexico and in Managua, Nicaragua.

Czechoslovaks Stohr Jiri, Barta Petr, Synek Stalislav, Petr Delibor, and Jenis Frantise were arrested on 17 March when they entered Guatemala driving a huge "Tatra" truck, in which they carried cameras, a motorcycle, parts for small planes, and varied sophisticated equipment, which made the military men suspicious about them.

According to the Guatemalan Army, the Czechoslovaks did not declare all that equipment at customs, and they are charged with being spies interested in taking pictures of military targets.

According to Prague, the men arrested are: a newsman, a photographer, a mechanic, a geographer, and a translator, all of whom obtained tourist visas in Mexico to enter Guatemala and are members of a group promoting the Tatra truck to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Czechoslovak car industry. The group has been in 16 European countries, the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Their objective is to visit 60 countries.

Honduras

Armed Forces Charge 22 March EPS Incursions

PA240120 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2324 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 23 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Today the Honduran Armed Forces charged that EPS troops on Tuesday afternoon carried out new armed incursions into Honduran territory in the region of Bocay, on the border with Nicaragua.

A military spokesman has told ACAN-EFE that he has no report on armed clashes between the aggressors and Honduran Army troops, which this weekend had left for that region.

Today Defense Minister Colonel Wilfredo Sanchez confirmed that he has information that this week Sandinist troops carried out a new incursion in the Bocay region and reported that military personnel had been sent to the area to investigate.

The military sector has no information on armed clashes having occurred between Sandinist and Honduran Army troops, which, for the past 4 days, have been looking for mines in the area the invading forces supposedly occupied.

Sanchez said that local troops have been sent to the border area to confirm reports about the new Nicaraguan incursion which, he said, was carried out at 1550 (2150 GMT) this Tuesday.

Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran ambassador to the United Nations, today charged that on Monday [as received] the Sandinists carried out two incursions into Honduran territory, one in the sector of Bocay, with approximately 300 troops, and another in the Puerto Espanol area, in the Honduran Department of Paraiso, with 50 men.

The Honduran departments of Olancho and Paraiso share borders with Nicaragua.

It has not been reported whether Honduras, in light of the allegations of new Nicaraguan incursions into Honduran territory, will ask the United States not to order the return of the 3,200 U.S. troops sent last week to this Central American country.

The U.S. soldiers have plans to return to their bases this weekend, according to an announcement made today by Honduran Foreign Secretary Carlos Lopez Contreras.

Today Ministers Sanchez and Lopez Contreras were at the National Congress to explain the Sandinist incursions of last week and the decision of President Jose Azcona Hoyo to request "effective and immediate" assistance from the United States.

Party Leaders Critical of U.S. Troop Presence

PA232209 [Editorial Report] San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish on 19 March carries several reports on the initial reactions of Honduran political party leaders to the arrival and presence of U.S. troops in Honduras as a result of the Honduran-Nicaraguan border clash.

The first report, on page 9, cites Innovation and Unity Party President German Leitzelar as saying that "the presence of U.S. troops" in Honduras "hurts the morale and dignity of the people." Leitzelar also says the Honduran Government acted irresponsibly when it asked for immediate U.S. military aid, despite the Honduran Armed Forces' huge budget.

The second report, on page 10, says Liberal Party presidential candidate Ramon Villeda has invited the U.S. troops stationed at the Palmerola military base as a warning to Sandinist troops "advancing" on Honduras to leave the country. Villeda noted that "a foreign military presence is undesirable."

The third report, also on page 10, cites Christian Democratic Party President Ruben Palma as saying the U.S. Government is provoking a military confrontation between Honduras and Nicaragua with the strategic objective of securing more aid for the contras. Palma says: "Before asking the United States for help, President Azcona should have resorted to other institutions such as the United Nations and our own National Congress, if it is true that there was such invasion."

Tegucigalpa LA TRIBUNA in Spanish on 21 March on page 9 publishes an editorial that views the dispatch of U.S. troops to Honduras as a message from President Reagan to his people that if the contras do not fight in Nicaragua, then U.S. troops would have to do the fighting.

Nicaragua

Government, RN Agree on Cease-Fire, Amnesty

Joint Document

PA240648 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0511 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Joint document signed by the Nicaraguan Government and the Nicaraguan Resistance (RN) at Sapoa on 23 March—read by OAS Secretary General Joao Clemente Baena Soares]

[Text] The constitutional government of the Republic of Nicaragua and the Nicaraguan Resistance, RN, who met at Sapoa, Nicaragua, on 21, 22, and 23 March 1988 to contribute toward national reconciliation, in the framework of the Esquipulas II agreements, and in the presence of witnesses His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, president of the Nicaraguan Espiscopal Conference; and His Excellency Ambassador Joao Clemente Baena Soares, OAS secretary general, have reached the following agreement:

1. To cease military offensive operations throughout the national territory for a period of 60 days as of 1 April of this year. During this period, an overall negotiating process will be carried out for a definitive cease-fire, whose enforcement will occur jointly with the Esquipulas II commitments to end the war. The two sides agree to hold a top-level meeting in Managua on 6 April to continue the negotiations for a definitive cease-fire.

2. During the first 15 days, RN forces will remain in areas whose location, size, and control procedures will be agreed upon jointly through special commissions at a meeting in Sapoa to begin on Monday, 28 March.

3. The Nicaraguan Government will decree a general amnesty for those tried and sentenced for public order and security violations under the order and public security enforcement law, as well as for members of the previous regime's army for crimes perpetrated before 19 July 1979. In the case of the former, the amnesty will be gradual and take into consideration the Nicaraguan people's religious beliefs on the occasion of the Holy Week and Palm Sunday, which will be initiated with the release of the first 100 prisoners.

Later, when the time of the arrival of the RN forces at the areas jointly agreed upon has been verified, 50 percent of the prisoners will be released. The remaining 50 percent will be released after the definitive cease-fire agreement has been signed. This date will be agreed upon during the 6 April meeting in Managua. The release of the prisoners mentioned at the end of the first paragraph in this article will begin as soon as the definitive cease-fire agreement has been signed and approved by the OAS Inter-American Human Rights Commission. The OAS secretary general will guarantee and ensure the fulfillment of this amnesty.

4. To guarantee food and basic supplies for the unconventional forces, only humanitarian aid will be negotiated and accepted in accordance with article 5 of the Esquipulas II agreement. This aid will be channeled through neutral organizations.

5. The Nicaraguan Government will guarantee freedom of speech without limitations as provided for in the Esquipulas II agreement.

6. Once the RN forces are concentrated in the areas mutually agreed upon, they will send delegates to the national dialogue to represent as many political organizations as comprise them, with a maximum of eight. The topic of the military service, among others, will be discussed at the national dialogue.

7. It is guaranteed that all of the people who have left the country for political or other reasons may return to Nicaragua, regardless of their economic or social status, and join the political, economic, and social processes without any conditions beyond those stipulated in the Republic's laws. They will not be tried, penalized, or persecuted for any political or military activities in which they may have engaged.

8. The Nicaraguan Government confirms that the people who have rejoined peaceful life may participate, under equal conditions and guarantees, in the elections for the Central American parliament and municipal elections on the dates that may be fixed to hold them, as well as in the general national elections on the dates stipulated by the Constitution.

9. For the purpose of verifying compliance with this agreement, a verification commission will be appointed. It will be composed of His Eminence Cardinal Obando y Bravo, president of the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference; and His Excellency Ambassador Joao Clemente Baena Soares, OAS secretary general. The technical cooperation and services required by this commission to permit and expedite the compliance with, follow-up, and verification of this agreement will be requested from and entrusted to the OAS secretary general.

(?Interim provision): The two sides agree to extend to 1 April 1988 the cessation of effective military operations agreed to by parties on 21 March.

In witness whereof, the undersigned sign this agreement in four copies of the same tenor in Sapoa, Rivas, Nicaragua, on 23 March 1988.

On behalf of the Nicaraguan Government:

Humberto Ortega, Defense Minister

Hans-Jurgen Wischnewski, adviser

Paul Riechler, adviser

On behalf of the Nicaraguan Resistance:

Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, director

Alfredo Cesar Aguirre, director

Aristides Sanchez Herdocia, director

RN Cease-fire Commission:

Jaime Moralez Carazo, chief negotiator

Roberto Borroz Castillo

Fernando Aguero Rocha

Walter Calderon Lopez (Commander Tono)

Diogenes Hernandez Membreno (Commander Fernando)

Arturo Salazar Barberena (Commander Omar)

Dozorno Coleman (Commander Blas)

Ramon Emilio Jimenez, adviser

Witnesses:

Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo

Ambassador Joao Clemente Baena Soares

D. Ortega Comments

PA240712 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0547 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Speech by President Daniel Ortega Saavedra on the occasion of the signing of the cease-fire agreement with the Nicaraguan Resistance in Sapoa—live]

[Text] Good evening, Nicaraguan brothers. I speak to you as the constitutional president of this fatherland of Dario and Sandino. I speak to you, interpreting the sentiments, desires, and proposals of the Nicaraguan people that have always been proposals in favor of peace, justice, and freedom. For this reason, the Nicaraguan people rose up bravely on that glorious triumph of 19 July 1979. For this reason, the Nicaraguan people rise up again today, proudly, defending the fatherland's integrity, self-determination, independence, freedom, justice, democracy, and peace.

All Nicaraguans on this day must assume with the greatest sense of responsibility the task of ending, once and for all, this cruel war, which has put Nicaraguan brothers in confrontation with each other and which has been imposed on the Nicaraguan people. It is time for Nicaraguans to decide to build our own destiny. We must strengthen this society that we have been developing since 19 July 1979, which has as its basis the people's aspirations, expressed through political pluralism, a mixed economy, and a policy of nonalignment. We must strengthen this society by strengthening the struggle in the civic sphere and by ending the military confrontation forever.

These have been days of great efforts. I recognize those who have been involved in this negotiating effort. However, I also recognize the Latin American community and the Contadora and Support Groups, which were the foundations of what would subsequently be stated in the peace plan proposed by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias with a Central American and Bolivarian spirit. It is a peace plan that all Central Americans signed to comply with the isthmus. The peace plan is an effort to strengthen democracy in Central America. The peace plan was signed to take justice and freedom to all of Central America; to end war in Central America; to defend the Central American people's right to be independent; and to free us from all foreign military forces that must leave the Central American region. It is a peace plan for all Central Americans.

Corresponding with this peace plan—which has been heroically defended by the Nicaraguan people; the EPS fighters; the peasants; the workers; the women; the mothers; the international community; the U.S. people; and U.S. representatives, like Mr Jim Wright—great efforts were made in this negotiating process. We reached this agreement after this negotiating process, which included the participation of His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo and OAS Secretary General Joao Baena Soares. This is an agreement that is based on a devotion to peace by all Nicaraguans, all of us who have gathered here, determined to bury the battle axe and raise the olive branch of peace.

We are facing a great challenge, because this is only the beginning. Now we have to build this path to peace, and we must do this by faithfully complying with this peace plan signed tonight in Sapoa, Nicaragua.

This is a great challenge for all Nicaraguans at a time when the U.S. Government is supporting this effort and is preparing to normalize its relations with Nicaragua. We Nicaraguans have taken the first step; we Nicaraguans have to take the second step with the U.S. Government. We are prepared to take that second step, and we invite U.S. President Ronald Reagan to also join in the peace effort to which we Nicaraguans subscribed today in Sapoa.

We today extend our respect to all the war victims, to those who are still falling in our land, because we have always said that in this confrontation, imposed on Nicaraguans, we Nicaraguans are the victims. The dead, the wounded, the disfigured are Nicaraguans. For this reason, we have said that this confrontation has already claimed 50,000 victims in Nicaragua.

As president of the Nicaraguans, I hope that this peace plan will become a reality. We will make every effort, devote all our energies to working to see that this peace plan truly becomes a plan that brings peace and fraternity, eradicates hatred, and strengthens brotherhood among all Nicaraguans.

H. Ortega Remarks

PA240621 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0534 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Statement by Defense Minister Humberto Ortega on the occasion of the s gning of the cease-fire agreement with the Nicaraguan Resistance in Sapoa—live]

[Text]After long working sessions at this historic meeting in Sapoa, we reached the agreements read by the OAS Secretary General. We have the conviction that with the same determination with which we reached these specific agreements, we will be able to continue working to carry them out, and in so doing we will have culminated this historic effort.

Calero Comments

PA241425 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0536 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Statement by Nicaraguan Resistance leader Adolfo Calero on the occasion of the signing of the cease-fire agreement with the Nicaraguan Government in Sapoa—live]

[Text] [Calero] First of all, I hope God will bless the agreement signed today by the Nicaraguan Government and the RN for the sake of national reconciliation and the peace and freedom demanded by Nicaraguans both inside and outside the country.

After the initial indirect talks, which began early in December through mediator His Emminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo in the Dominican Republic, where we were welcomed by that country, its president, and especially by our friend, former Dominican Foreign Minister Admiral Ramon Emilio Jimenez, today, 23 March, we have taken the first step toward the achievement of the peace all Nicaraguans need.

After 3 days of hard work, we have reached a sincere and viable agreement. It is an agreement that can and must be complied with for the good of all Nicaraguans, for the good of our Central American brothers, and for the good of the continent and the entire world.

The Nicaraguan Government and we, the RN, have acquired a very serious obligation. I am sure both parties will fulfill this obligation. This agreement includes central issues that were pointed out to us by our spiritual guide Cardinal Obando y Bravo, such as amnesty, in other words, forgetting. We must forget insults. This is very important for the sake of the love that all Nicaraguans should feel for each other.

In addition the agreement includes unrestrained freedom of press, which is a need in every country, and a reorganization of the compulsory military service that (?will be discussed) in the national dialogue. This will make Nicaraguan mothers very happy.

I hope, trust, and believe that today we made an initial, but firm step to end this fratricidal war and stop killing brothers, the sons of the same fatherland and of the same mothers. Thank you.

Alfredo Cesar Remarks

PA241455 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0541 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Statement by Alfredo Cesar, member of the Nicaraguan Resistance, on the occasion of the signing of the cease-fire agreement with the Nicaraguan Government in Sapoa—live]

[Text] I was in Sapoa 9 years ago, when the revolutionary forces—at that time of the Southern Front—were marching over Managua following the popular triumph against the Somozist dictatorship. Nine years later, I have returned to this small town in our homeland's southern region with the same convictions I then had. We have taken the first real step for national reconciliation, peace, and Nicaragua's reconstruction. The agreement was reached among Nicaraguans. It is the result of intensive negotiations, goodwill, and confidence in the future of this long-suffering country.

In addition to His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, who has guided us with his permanent inspiration through all these years of conflict in our homeland, and the great contribution given by the OAS secretary general to the signing of this agreement, I cannot fail to mention tonight that this has also been possible thanks to the efforts of other men. In addition to the Nicaraguans and the OAS secretary general, I specifically refer to the fact that this has been possible with the implementation of the Esquipulas II peace plan in Central America, which was inspired by the work of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and signed by the five Central American presidents in August. It is also their responsibility, as well as of other international personalities, including U.S. personalities, to contribute to the strengthening and total implementation of the agreements signed by the two parties today.

Distinguished U.S. personalities from the two main U.S. political parties have also made this agreement possible. I also want to say that they have an enormous and significant opportunity to give effective support to the agreements we have just signed. I must mention the constructive efforts conducted by House Speaker Wright, among those U.S. personalities. We hope he will also make the necessary efforts to contribute to the future recovery of Nicaragua's feeble economy.

I would like to say this to the Nicaraguan people: In my thoughts are the Nicaraguan mothers and the youths who are forced to fight in a war among brothers, all the pain, tears, and destruction in our homeland. For this reason, this historic effort should not be dodged under any circumstances. Once again, the Nicaraguan Government has the historic responsibility of fully complying with this agreement, as the RN is fully determined to do.

To the heroic RN fighters: I want to say that their personal safety and security have been sacred objectives at all times. They have been a decisive factor in arriving at this point, and they will continue to guarantee compliance with the agreements. To them, my recognition and our people's gratitude.

The Sapoa agreements are not merely an opportunity to achieve peace and reconciliation. In fact, they represent the only opportunity. Let us be worthy of the confidence that so many people have deposited on us.

Viva Nicaragua!

Contras Ambush EPS Truck 22 March; 2 Killed

PA231847 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Spokesmen for the Defense Ministry reported that two EPS members were killed by Somozist counterrevolutionaries who ambushed an EPS truck yesterday. The attack occurred at 1400 yesterday afternoon on the road leading to Mulucucu, Matagalpa Department. The criminal action took place 24 hours after contra spokesman Bosco Matamoros said that his forces had joined the cease-fire called for by the EPS.

RN 'Unaware' of Attack

PA232030 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1912 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Liberia, Costa Rica, 23 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Today a Nicaraguan Resistance (RN) spokesman said that he was unaware of an alleged ambush perpetrated today by the "contras" against an EPS truck, but he admitted that because of the difficulties in supervising irregular forces these types of incidents may occur.

The source, who asked to remain anonymous, told ACAN-EFE that yesterday, General Humberto Ortega, head of the Sandinist delegation in the round of talks held in Sapoa, said that these incidents may take place without their resulting in the breaking of the military truce agreed upon on 21 March. [passage omitted]

The source, who was consulted by ACAN-EFE in this city—located 220 km north of the Costa Rican capital and where the RN has its center of operations—said that Humberto Ortega had stated yesterday that "all efforts" were being exerted to make the truce effective, but he admitted that "it is difficult for an order of this type to reach all irregular forces."

"(The Sandinists) know very well that there are small patrols that do not have any means of communications. This happens with regular armies, and even more with irregular forces," the source said. However, he said he was unaware of the incident.

The source also indicated that the talks "have entered a difficult stage" in view of the mutual distrust between both sides, but he added that the differences "may be overcome."

The source also said that the distrust of the Sandinist delegation lies in the decision to decree a general amnesty, because it assumes that if the talks break up, the released prisoners would join the ranks of the "contras."

He stated that the RN has not decided whether to sign an indefinite cease-fire agreement, because then the authorities in Managua may not fulfill the points related to democratization.

Both sides are seeking the appointment of "guarantors" as a solution so both the RN and the Sandinists respect their commitments, he said.

R. Wheelock Denies EPS Cease-Fire Violations

PA232136 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1955 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Report by Javier Reyes and Luis Cabrera from Sapoa]

[Text] [Reyes] We are walking with Major Ricardo Wheelock, EPS military intelligence chief, on our way to where the meeting is taking place. The contras said a few minutes ago that the EPS had violated the truce announced on Monday by Army General Humberto Ortega.

[Wheelock] We want to say through Radio Sandino to all our people that the EPS has not violated the orders issued by our commander in chief, Army Gen Humberto Ortega. What really happened in some areas is that the Army had to defend itself from the counterrevolutionary forces' attacks. We suspended all of the Army's offensive operations when Army Gen Humberto Ortega issued his orders. All we have done is defend ourselves. For example, an attack was carried out yesterday on our positions from Honduran territory, in the San Andres de Bocay sector. We were attacked with mortar fire so we had to return the fire.

[Reyes] Were there any casualties from the attack?

[Wheelock] No, no, we have no casualties; we have no information about casualties so far.

[Reyes] There are reports about a massacre in Wiwili...excuse me, in Mulukuku. Is that true?

[Wheelock] I think the Army's Public Relations Directorate will issue the report in due time.

[Reyes] Maj Ricardo Wheelock, one last question please. The counterrevolutionary spokesman said there were some clashes between the EPS and the counterrevolution.

[Wheelock] The Army suspended all its offensive operations from the very moment Gen Ortega's orders were issued.

[Reyes] Thank you, Maj Ricardo Wheelock, Nicaraguan Army military intelligence chief. We now have a report from Luis Cabrera:

[Cabrera] Thank you, Javier. A few minutes ago [Nicaraguan Resistance spokesman] Bosco Matamoros was asked about the United States' financial aid and support to the contras, and he replied that the United States is in the north. He should have said the United States is north of Liberia, because we know there are some CIA officials in La Cruz. The CIA officials are there to talk, give advice, and discuss things [with the contras].

We also know that Bosco Matamoros..excuse me, Frank Arana went out for consultations. We do not know why. The famous cossack, director of Radio 15 September—now transformed into Radio Liberacion, which operates from Honduran territory—has left the meeting for some consultations.

[Reyes] Now that you mention it, the cossack reinforced his team this morning. He brought in Marisa Leal Paniagua and Rosario Vega. We do not know who they are; this is the first time we have heard their names. Anyway, the cossack brought them in to reinforce their work, shortly before departing for Liberia. We do not know why, but we have information that CIA agents and U.S. Government officials accredited to Costa Rica are

there. Have they installed a general headquarters or command post to coordinate their activities in Sapoa? The evidence is there, and this is nothing new. Everyone knows that the CIA organizes, finances, and directs their activities.

UN Commission Arrives To Probe Border 'Events'

PA240323 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0050 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] The special UN commission that will investigate the events at the border with Honduras arrived in Managua at 1730.

The commission consists of advisers Gilberto Schlitter-Silva from Brazil and Aleksandr Martinovic from Peru, as well as military advisers Jose Viggiano and Eduardo Gorgitano from Uruguay.

The commission has arrived at the request of the Nicaraguan Government in order to make it clear that Nicaraguan troops did not enter Honduran territory during the "Santo-88" operation, which expelled the Somozist mercenaries from the camps in the Bocay area, in Nicaraguan territory.

Panama

Noriega Addresses People's Unity Front Meeting

PA232248 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1957 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Speech by General Manuel Antonio Noriega, commander of the Panama Defense Forces, at a People's Unity Front meeting in the National Lottery Building auditorium in Panama City "at noon" on 23 March—recorded]

[Text] Comrades of all the organizations, leaders: You 500 leaders represent all the people's patriotic forces of the Republic of Panama. After listening to the emotion and content of the speech of Dr [Romelia de] Pardo [member of the Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, Political Commission], I am left with nothing to say. He said everything.

The comments you have made during this time of coordination demonstrate that within the framework of the aggression, within the framework of the threats coming from that aggression, and within the framework of the deprivations that are a part of the plan, a great maturity, a great conviction, and a complete awareness that this is the way to resolve Panama's problems has transpired.

None of you leaders who represent the country's unionized and organized popular majorities have had to ask permission of the U.S. State Department. [applause] None of you 500 leaders here have had to first hold a meeting with [U.S. Ambassador to Panama] Arthur Davis. [applause]

That, gentlemen, is the crux of the real, totally real difference that shows that those who do not want dialogue are not rejecting it for patriotic or national reasons. They do not want it because they do not have the ability to represent the men you represent. [applause] That is why the political parties do not want the 1989 elections, because they do not have the organizational capability that you represent. [applause]

If elections were held as they want, right now, tomorrow, the people's forces would win. [applause] The nationalistic forces would win. The patriotic forces would win, because this struggle is not limited to one man, or to one man's interests, or to one man's community; it is based on the firm conviction that the fatherland needs this struggle at this time, or else it will surrender in 1999 with another army, with other men, and with other traitors. [applause]

For this reason, we have revealed the first big lie about the goodwill of the turncoat Panamanian forces, who use the hackneyed pretext of military domination of the civilian government; of an exaggerated military influence over the president of the Republic; of a lack of subordination. For this reason, in a joint agreement with the General Staff and the president of the Republic, we gave our first demonstration of goodwill; we gave our first demonstration of honesty and patriotism by making the Defense Forces subordinate to civilian government, but to an elected civilian government, to a civilian government fully approved by the popular forces in line with Panama's designs and patriotic needs. We submit to that civilian government to carry out a dialogue, a dialogue in which you cannot be stonefaced [as heard], a dialogue in which you must also be present, in which the needs... [changes thought] As we said in Cimarron, the people's forces have to be present, because it is not possible to negotiate their destiny.

Those who came, not for a dialogue or a conversation, but to give ultimatums, have on their agenda the disintegration of the people's forces. They have on their agenda the neutralization of the support parties. They have on their agenda a complete changeover of the Panamanian system to a system made in the image and likeness of their plans for the subjugation of the region.

Because they do not represent the Panamanian homeland, because they do not represent Panamanian interests, and because this struggle is not over one man's welfare but over a nation's dignity, we said no. [applause]

They have been wrong to think that the feeling of true Panamanian patriots is, so to speak, made of chocolate or that it is like a sugar lump that can melt in two drops of water. They have been wrong. Ours is a true feeling, one of dignity. Contribution, sacrifice, and the need to (?yield) will occur in the great context of the good of the great majorities and the great principles of Panamanian patriotism. This will never occur in a context of surrender, treason, and giving up the homeland and our future so that they can continue in 1999 what they started in 1904.

This is the struggle being waged today; it is a hard struggle; it is a struggle of trials, which history will record and present in its true light. This is a psychological struggle of threats. This is a tremendous struggle in which the millions invested to purchase the consciences, peace, and dignity of men has reached staggering figures. But the feelings, determination, and patriotism of men like you, who represent many other men like you, have also reached lofty heights. You have come here to maintain this national front, which will be one of dignity. This front will be the last bulwark where Panamanian men will write the stories of their patriotism for the good of our children. [applause]

This struggle must be executed with a cool head. This struggle must be militant and arouse the consciences. This is not to be a struggle of irresponsible kamikazes. This must be a scientific struggle, and we must realize the lures and provocations of some who seem to be picking a fight in order to strike back. Gentlemen, we will not fall for that, we will not. We must be alert. I think we need a political solution, a true, effective, nonmilitant, and speedy solution.

If there is to be a solution—and there must be a solution—we will also have to be creative and determined when seeking it. Just as we are determined to apply and maintain nationalist principles, politicians must continue to support defense in their respective fields so this great demand can be met and these leaders and popular forces can feel they have companeros working in a government team. These leaders and popular forces should be aware of suspicions and be aware that every minute of silence, every idle moment, and every fruitless meeting supports the antipatriotic forces that try to destroy us. [applause; a person shouts: "Out with the government employee strikers!" the crowd answers: "Out!" The first person shouts: "Let's change the currency!" the crowd answers: "At once!"]

A commission will talk with the president of the Republic about 13 practical points. We will add to make sure the count is right. [laughter, applause]

These points were drawn up in San Miguelito last night and could be the center of unification and trust for us all. At this time, mistrusting each other is an important part of our fear and of this psychological war. We need not only to trust others but also to be trusted; not only to be told we are trusted, but also to be trusted, indeed. We need others to demonstrate to us that they trust us so we can move forward.

Gentlemen, friends, leader brothers, I feel very moved and honored. In the name of the staff members, who are here with me; in the name of the Defense Forces, whose morale remains high and who maintain their patriotic ideas and concepts in accordance with dignity, I can tell you we will march forward with you. Our slogan—not a step backward—is not a slogan of war. It means we will not step backward. [applause]

U.S. Embassy Official Ordered To Leave Country

PA232233 Panama City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 23 Mar 88 pp 1, 8

[Note issued by the Protocol and State Ceremony Directorate of the Foreign Ministry in Panama City on 23 March]

[Text] C.E. [expansion unknown] No 362

The Foreign Ministry's Protocol and State Ceremony Directorate greets the honorable U.S. Embassy to inform it that [U.S. Embassy Economic Counselor] Mr David N. Miller has been declared persona non grata, and, for this reason, the Panamanian state no longer considers him an acceptable diplomatic agent.

In addition, the Protocol and State Ceremony Directorate informs the honorable embassy that Mr David N. Miller will have to leave Panamanian territory 48 (forty-eight) hours after this note is delivered to the U.S. Embassy, and that when this deadline expires, the Panamanian authorities will not recognize any privileges or immunities for Mr Miller.

The Protocol and State Ceremony Directorate announces that it will assign one of its officials to accompany Mr Miller to the means of transportation that will take him to the United States or to any other destination.

The Foreign Ministry's Protocol and State Ceremony Directorate takes this opportunity to reiterate to the honorable U.S. Embassy its highest consideration.

U.S. Soldiers 'Detained' in Panama City

PA232111 Paris AFP in Spanish 2005 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 23 Mar (AFP)—This afternoon the Panama Defense Forces detained 12 U.S. soldiers who were traveling through the middle of Panama City in two vehicles, military sources from both countries confirmed to AFP.

The soldiers—12 Americans dressed in military uniforms—were detained this afternoon on the Ricardo J. Alfaro highway in the Panamanian capital as they rode in a 10-wheel "Commander" truck and a pick-up.

When asked by AFP, the officer in charge of the U.S. troops said only that "we did not know we were in the capital."

The Panamanian officer in charge of the detention commented that he could not understand why the vehicles were in the middle of the city, contrary to agreements between the United States and Panama.

At this moment, it is not known whether the troops were armed or what will happen to them.

The group detained has their operations base at the U.S. Southern Command headquarters, some 22 km north [as received] of the place where they were detained.

'Act of Provocation'

PA240043 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0010 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] Today U.S. soldiers from the 193d Infantry Brigade Battalion were involved in a new act of provocation and open violation of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties when they traveled, without an assigned escort, on Ricardo J. Alfaro Avenue.

The treaties in effect establish that any convoy traveling in Panama must have an assigned military escort. The 12 U.S. soldiers were accompanied by two top officers when they were detained.

In view of this, members of a vigilance patrol and Panama Defense Forces traffic units detained the violators.

After pertinent negotiations, Panama Military Police units escorted the U.S. soldiers to the canal sector, once again showing that the U.S. Southern Command is carrying out these interventionist acts and is maintaining its attitude of promoting conflict between the two countries in order to justify a military intervention in Panama.

Opposition Leaders Reject Dialogue Offer

PA231613 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 23 Mar 88 pp 1, A-2

[Unattributed article]

[Excerpts] Yesterday Guillermo Endara, vice president of the Authentic Panamenist Party and Dr Arnulfo Arias Madrid's official spokesman, rejected the call to dialogue issued by Manuel Solis Palma, minister in charge of the Presidency, because he believes the proposals "go against the party members' views." [passage omitted]

After considering Solis Palma's call to a dialogue as "absolutely unacceptable," Legislator Ruben Rosas, vice president of the Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement (MOLIRENA), said that "the sectors controlling power must think things over with a sense of national responsibility and accept that a government of national reconciliation is needed to immediately reestablish and carry out efforts for national reconstruction." [passage omitted]

Professor Miliciades Cerrud, a teachers' leader in the National Civic Crusade, said they reject Solis Palma's proposal because it reflects the desire to remain in power and not the desire to seek the Panamanian people's well-being.

Cerrud described the speech as "empty" and without any legal foundation, because it was delivered by someone who does not represent the constitutional order and who does not have the people's support.

Meanwhile, yesterday the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] issued a communique stating that "Mr Solis Palma totally lacks legitimacy; therefore, his offer of a national dialogue is in no way serious even though for the first time he has admitted that General Noriega must leave power."

"One is not serious when one proposes a national dialogue when the most basic conditions and guarantees to hold it do not exist, and much less when the individual proposing it lacks credibility and legitimacy," the PDC communique stated.

The PDC believes "the proposal for a national dialogue is only a new stratagem to extend the permanence of the Noriega regime in power, a permanence that worsens the increasing suffering and frustration of Panamanian society."

Legislator Guillermo Cochez said PDC President Ricardo Arias Calderon will try to enter the country on 24 March from Costa Rica. He will arrive aboard a plane of the Panamanian Aviation Company (COPA) and will be accompanied by legislators Oscar Saborio of the Costa Rican Social Christian Unity and Heriberto Scharrembcoich. [passage omitted]

Further Reaction

PA241445 [Editorial Report] Panama City Telemetro Television in Spanish at 2300 GMT on 23 March broadcasts six reports on the reaction to the call by Manuel Solis Palma, minister in charge of the Presidency, for a national dialogue to resolve the current crisis in Panama.

In the first report, the station quotes Eduardo Rios, president of the Democratic Party of the Workers, as stating that the minister in charge of the Presidency's call for a dialogue is timely and the dialogue should be held without any rhetoric.

The station then reports the reaction of Olimpo Saenz, president of the Popular Nationalist Party, PNP, who says: "I feel the call for a dialogue by Manuel Solis Palma has come too late and I do not think it can take place. The PNP feels it definitely cannot be held at this time."

In a third report, Graciela Dixon, a Revolutionary Party of the Workers leader, says: "We are not sure the dialogue can address the needs of the masses, particularly in the manner in which those needs are being handled. We think the dialogue would be held to discuss the opposition's proposals as an option, and we think those do not represent the interests of the people's movement."

The station then reports that the opposition groups have turned down Solis' proposal. Aurelio Barria, representing these groups, reads part of an opposition communique: "Many years of experience have demonstrated to the public that the military regime has no intention of

restoring to civilians the moral and political authority required to restore confidence in all Panamanians and foreigners living here in a government that would guarantee order, progress, and stability."

In another report, Rigoberto Paredes, a Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, leader, says: "The government has set the conditions for the dialogue." "I think this has also been a very patriotic effort by the president, which has been warmly welcomed by the political parties comprising UNADE (National Democratic Union)." Paredes adds: "Another element helping set the conditions for the dialogue is the gesture by General Noriega to place his position at the disposal of the president."

Finally, PRD President Romulo Escobar Bethancourt is quoted as saying that the points raised by the opposition can be resolved through a national dialogue but that using these points as obstacles is a tactic to hamper understanding among the sectors that want to hold a dialogue. Escobar Bethancourt says: "I think this dialogue is now more possible than ever."

Civic Crusade Demands Noriega 'Leave Now'

PA231925 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1744 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Panama City, 23 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Today the opposition National Civic Crusade said that the only option left for General Manuel Antonio Noriega, "in view of the destroyed economy and a population besieged by hunger," is for him "to leave now."

In a communique released to the country, the Crusade stated "there is certainly no desire [on the part of Noriega] to promote understanding to make the great rectifications that are needed because [Noriega's] blind craving for power has sunk the country into a state of prostration."

The document states that the current regime "intends to fool international public opinion" with the government's offer to hold a national dialogue and with the "false nationalism that blames foreigners" for the country's problems.

Likewise, it adds that the government has offered a dialogue tied "to Gen Manuel Antonio Noriega's alleged resignation, which no one from the dictatorship can make happen."

"Only Gen Noriega's immediate resignation and the withdrawal of the military to perform its constitutional duties can be the framework to promote a Panamanian solution," the opposition communique states. [passage omitted]

In a news conference held by the Crusade, Osvaldo Velasquez, president of the Panama Human Rights Commission, charged that cans of meat being handed out by the government to its employees as part of their salaries expired 5 years ago.

Velasquez charges coincide with a large number of complaints from employees, who say the cans have a warning that reads that the contents may be consumed until 1983. Other state workers said they were given rotten chicken meat. [passage omitted]

Small Stores, Restaurants Join Strike

PA231606 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1444 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 23 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Thousands of drivers waited in long lines last night, because gas stations announced their decision to join the strike called for by the Civic Crusade and the Panamanian opposition.

The strike, which is aimed at removing Army Commander in Chief General Manuel Antonio Noriega from his post, began its 3d day today strongly, because small stores, restaurants, and grocery stores—which do not usually support this type of movement—are closing at noon because of the lack of products and clients.

Thousands of people started buying gas yesterday afternoon when the gas stations announced they would join the strike at 1400 on 22 March. However, vehicles were still in lines at gas stations last night.

In addition, hundreds of soldiers posted in strategic points in Panama City increased their surveillance, searched cars, and asked for the indentification cards of drivers and passengers riding in cars in the city, although the government has stated that people can move freely throughout the country.

A state of emergency was decreed throughout the country on 18 March in view of an alleged undeclared war by the local opposition in alliance with the United States.

The strike is supported by the main supermarket chains in Panama City, the industrial and business sectors, the wholesale market, the construction sector, dry-goods stores, and thousands of United Fruit Company banana workers on the Costa Rican border.

The losses caused by the strike have not yet been calculated, but are estimated in millions of dollars per day.

Minister on Strike Impact

PA240114 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0013 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] Today Commerce and Industry Minister Mario Rognoni said that the businessmen's strike carried out by the opposition is not currently affecting the nation's treasury because the revenue being received corresponds to last year's fiscal period.

However, he said the strike's impact on the economy will be felt later. Rognoni said the government is trying to again circulate more cash than normal to encourage those merchants who had to close for economic reasons to open.

The commerce minister added that importing flour and other products is foreseen to the extent that industries that have to supply the local market do not do so.

Regarding the reaction to a decree permitting the tariff-free import of flour, Rognoni said:

[Begin recording] [Rognoni] We said it since the crisis began and while it has been deteriorating: As a government, we are firmly committed to guaranteeing the people all their basic needs. If an enterprise does not want to supply the flour to the market, we definitely will not keep the people from getting the normal food they are used to in their diet. The permission to import has been granted so that all those needing flour can bring it into the country or can receive it through state agencies.

[Reporter] The gasoline stations went on strike yesterday. What is the situation with the Panama refinery's fuel supply and its service to the gasoline stations in the capital?

[Rognoni] The strike does not include the refinery or the petroleum companies. The problem is with the distributors, what we commonly call the gasoline stations. However, the situation was overcome in meetings with them. We know that some of them will remain closed for political reasons, but most were operating normally at noon today.

[Reporter] Mr Minister, apparently the strike has been strongly supported in the country. If this situation continues, how long can the country resist?

[Rognoni] The businessmen can answer that because it is now not how much the government can take but how much the businesses will resist if they cannot generate revenues. As members of the state, we are worried about the country's general welfare. Therefore, our effort is aimed at keeping jobs open, having people in the public and private sector receive their salaries, and restoring normalcy in order to lead the economy to growth once more. [end recording]

Situation 'Worsened Further'

PA240446 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2311 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Panama City, 23 Mar (DPA)—The situation in Panama worsened further today on the 3d consecutive day of the strike, which has paralyzed the country. Meanwhile, the United States stepped up its military maneuvers in the neighboring Panama Canal Zone.

In addition to the scarcity of foodstuffs, gasoline and diesel fuel have become scarce, reducing transportation by 80 percent.

Today the National Civic Crusade announced in a written statement that "the dictator Noriega wants to confuse the world with a proposal to step down as military commander before the elections." [passage omitted]

The general strike extended today to the docks and hospitals as the National Federation of Public Servants (FENASEP) has continued its efforts to get the government to pay the 60 percent of the salaries for the first half of March it still owes them and the salaries for the second half of March. FENASEP claims the government does not have the $60 million it needs to cover these obligations.

The food situation is chaotic and Panamanians are resisting with what they had stashed in their homes before the general strike began.

The funeral of Alcibiades Vasquez, 24, who died last night after being wounded during the disturbances of 16 March by gunmen in civilian clothes, was held today. Slogans against Noriega were shouted during the mass held at Christ the King Church. On the way to the cemetery, opponents shouted "military murderers." [passage omitted]

Antiriot police stood watch, but there were no incidents, even though the demonstrators shouted "cowardly military." [passage omitted]

Late this afternoon, the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] reported that "we are in full control of the country."

Meanwhile, the Civic Crusade said that "the 3d day of the strike has been a complete success. All Panama is paralyzed, waiting for Noriega to leave." It said the strike will continue "until Noriega leaves."

The government announced that it will open people's markets in several places in Panama City to supply staples, such as coffee, rice, sugar, beans, milk, and flour, to the population.

This afternoon FENASEP reported that it is making efforts for the government to print bills of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 balboas to replace U.S. currency, which is used in the country.

According to diplomatic sources, the Panamanian opposition has submitted a proposal to Solis Palma's government calling for Noriega to leave for Spain within the next 48 hours.

He would be immediately replaced by Colonel Elias Castillo, who is a member of the FDP General Staff, with full powers to reorganize the FDP, and Noriega would then be granted full guarantees to leave with any people he wishes.

A transitional government of national unity would be established and an immediate call would be issued to hold elections in September, in which all registered parties would participate.

The proposal provides for the inclusion in the cabinet of three members of the Democratic Revolutionary Party, the largest party supporting the government.

Women Protest U.S. 'Hunger Siege,' 'Meddling'

PA231451 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1405 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City area community leaders began a vigil for peace last night in front of the U.S. Embassy on Balboa Avenue to protest the hunger siege against our country.

Approximately 70 women are in front of the U.S. Embassy holding a Panamanian flag in one hand and a small candle in the other.

With this vigil, women from the capital district are rejecting U.S. meddling in Panama's domestic affairs.

Delvalle Requests Food Aid From World Leaders

PA231451 Paris AFP in Spanish 1347 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Panama City, 23 Mar (AFP)—Last night deposed Panamanian President Eric Delvalle asked the world chiefs of state to send food to the "poor and humble" Panamanians who have not been able to buy food because of the current crisis.

In a taped message, Delvalle, whose whereabouts have been unknown since he was dismissed on 25 February, said that "in our struggle to end the domination of General Manuel Antonio Noriega and the military, Panama is paralyzed."

"The public workers," he added, "have not received wages for two biweekly pay periods, a general strike has been in force since Monday, and people with low incomes have not been able to buy food."

In the 2-minute message, to which AFP gained acces, Delvalle requested "urgent and solidarity aid for our humble people, because I fear for the health and lives of many Panamanian families. Therefore, I appeal to your great sensitivity and humanitarian feelings, asking you to send food to these poor and humble fellow citizens." On two previous occasions Delvalle interfered with local radio broadcasts to come out against Noriega and express support for the National Civic Crusade.

Arrest Ordered of Delvalle's Envoy to U.S.

PA241405 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 24 Mar 88 pp 12, 11

["Text" of note from the attorney general to the director of the penitentiary system dated 16 March]

[Text] Panama, 16 March 1988

Lieutenant Colonel Eric Aguilera

Director of the Penitentiary System

Today this office has decided to request your cooperation in the preventive arrest [arresto preventivo] of Juan B. Sosa Berbey [Panamanian ambassador to the United States appointed by President Eric Arturo Delvalle].

Mr Sosa Berbey is charged with crimes against the internal legal status of the state [personalidad interna del estado], usurping public office, and other offenses.

Sincerely yours,

Carlos Augusto Villalaz B.

Attorney General

More Foreign Ministry Appointments Annulled

PA240123 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 0030 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] The national government has annulled more Foreign Ministry appointments. The respective decrees were signed by President Manuel Solis Palma and Foreign Minister Jorge Abadia Arias. The appointments annulled include: Elizabeth de Clare, deputy director of the Protocol and State Ceremony Directorate; Sandra Silvera, an attache in the same directorate; Reinaldo Decerega, an economic adviser at the Panamanian Embassy in Washington; and Ana Stella de Pozada, an attache in the Panamanian Embassy in Argentina.

FDP Troops Close Provincial Radio Station

PA231905 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 1621 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Interview with Legislator Francisco Arjona by correspondent Morales Campo; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Campo] Honorable Legislator, regarding the closure of the Ondas del Caribe radio station last Friday by Panama Defense Forces [FDP] troops, during which we were detained, what steps have been taken so this communications medium, closed by the dictatorship in Bocas del Toro, can be reopened.

[Arjona] First of all, I want to tell you that the station was closed in an arbitrary, prepotent manner, contrary to all legal precepts. There was no reason for it to be closed, only the fact that Ondas del Caribe reports the truth to

its thousands of listeners. At this moment, our listeners are demanding that this radio station be reopened. There is no document or resolution from the Government and Justice Ministry, which is the only office that can close communications media. It was done arbitrarily by the FDP and the governor of the province, who took the station's crystal oscillator. We spoke today to the major who is commander of the 8th military region, and he told us the matter is in the hands of the governor. However, we have been waiting for several days to see if the governor can tell us why the radio station was closed, violating all our country's laws, and once again gagging a communications medium. This has been done by a government that claims to be democratic, yet closes communications media, contrary to all legal and constitutional precepts that ensure freedom of expression. We hope that just as it was closed, the governor will return the crystal oscillator so Ondas del Caribe can resume its tasks, reporting the truth as it has done until now. [passage omitted]

PRD Summons Meeting Over U.S. Proposals

PA240339 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 23 Mar 88 p A-1

[Text] The National Political Commission of the Revolutionary Democratic Party [PRD] has been summoned by the party's National Executive Committee to discuss, among other things, "General Manuel Antonio Noriega's rejection of the proposal made by the U.S. State Department."

The meeting is scheduled for 1000 on 24 March in the PRD's Ascanio Villalaz center.

The PRD National Executive Committee summons the principal members of the National Political Commission to a meeting to take place at 1000 on 24 March at the Ascanio Villalaz center.

The meeting's agenda will be:

1. Rejection by Gen Manuel Antonio Noriega of the proposal presented by the U.S. State Department.

2. Analysis of the speech made by the minister in charge of the Presidency on 21 March.

3. Analysis of the events that took place on 16 March at the Defense Forces.

4. Report on the Rio de Janeiro meeting of COPPPAL [Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties].

5. Report by the Honor and Discipline Board.

6. Sundry items. Punctual attendance is requested. For the National Executive Committee, Alfredo Macharaviaya, Vice President Panama, 22 March 1988

Columnists Suggest Issuance of Paper Currency

[Editorial Report] PA231656 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish on 23 March on pages 2, 4, and 11 carries two commentaries under Baltazar Renan Aizpurua's "Political Coliseum" column.

The first commentary, written by Renan Aizpurua, is entitled "The Struggle Will Continue Until Victory Is Achieved." It analyzes President Manuel Solis Palma's recent speech, praising him for "warning the other nations about the new domination strategy that U.S. imperialism is implementing in Panama, which he described as financial piracy in the relations among states."

The commentary says that "Solis Palma mentioned the vulnerability of our monetary system and, thus, of our national economy. He stressed that the piratical U.S. actions have disclosed the need for conducting a careful and responsible analysis on the effectiveness of our monetary system, within the framework of our national sovereignty."

In that regard, Renan Aizpurua adds: "I want to publicly encourage President Solis Palma, our intelligent and patriotic-minded economists, and the men and women of my country to make the sovereign decision of issuing paper currency, as there are enough national resources with which we can back our own paper money."

The second column is a commentary written by economist Jose Guillermo Aizpu entitled "A Light in the Darkness?"

Aizpu suggests Panama should consider the possibility of having its own paper currency as a way to resolve the current financial crisis. He says that "balboas could be used to pay salaries, taxes, and other domestic transactions," adding that "dollars would only be used for international transactions."

Aizpu says "it is clear that establishing an autonomous monetary system would require careful planning to prevent collapses, catastrophic devaluations, and disorders." However, he adds that "there should be less skepticism, because, after all, Panama is the only country in the world using a foreign currency," which, in his opinion, "is another form of colonialism."

Aizpu recalled that in his 21 March speech, Solis announced that the government will conduct a careful analysis of our monetary system. He says this can be interpreted as meaning "for the first time, a high-level authority has hinted at the possibility Panama could step out of the mold it has been in since its creation, and, like the rest of the world, adopt an autonomous monetary system."

Concluding, he invites prominent economists to discuss his idea.

U.S. Military TV Station in Panama Condemned

PA241400 Panama City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 23 Mar 88 p 4

["Evening Comments" column by Emilio Lassen of the People's Revolutionary Youth]

[Text] According to the Torrijos-Carter Treaty stipulations, regulations on the use of radio and television frequencies within the Canal area grant the U.S. Armed Forces rights strictly concerning the defense of the Panama Canal and adjacent areas. In other words, in no way can these frequencies be used to attack our Republic through diatribe, fibs, deceit, etc.; much less to be used as a subversive springboard against our country's order.

The systematic aggression carried out by the SCN [Southern Command Network] Yankee television is part of the psychological warfare imposed upon us, and it stems precisely from that total warfare U.S. imperialism presently displays. The use of codes (such as Charlie and Delta; this last one is a signal of imminent military intervention), messages and unending disinformation—all this has become the framework for a well-orchestrated barrage aimed at destroying our sovereign state.

As in the worst times of Goebbels, information manipulation mechanisms are aimed at creating chaos, desperation, terror, and panic among the inhabitants and at psychologically preparing them for the climax, which in this case is an unrestricted illusion of war. This campaign seeks nothing more and nothing less than that, and that is what the U.S. television fires at us here in Panama.

Our people's struggle is not directed exclusively at erradicating the Americans from the canal and the military bases. This struggle has its highest purpose expressed in the culmination of an independent national state. Therefore, just as we speak of cultural and territorial sovereignty, we could not leave out the essence of sovereignty of information, and this should be present at this moment, in the battle against imperialism.

We should not allow SCN TV-8 to continue to meddle in the internal affairs of our country. It is up to our authorities to preserve total defense of sovereignty all over the country's territory. Therefore, it is necessary that the Government and Justice Ministry not only speak out, but take action, reviewing all aspects that regulate the use of radio and television frequencies in the canal area as covered in the Torrijos-Carter Treaties. People's Revolutionary Youth. Emilio Lassen, ID 8-255-472, Panama, 20 March 1988.

Argentina

CGT Declares State of Alert, Mobilizes

PY231709 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 23 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Text] (NA)— The General Confederation of Labour (CGT) yesterday declared a state of alert and mobilization and demanded an early meeting with President Raul Alfonsin to discuss measures to limit the scope of the socio-economic crisis.

The demand was seen as a first step to what could become a renewal of the CGT's industrial action plan which has been in abeyance since the general strikes staged on December 8 and 9.

The labour organization also decided to take part in the march that striking teachers plan for next Friday on Plaza de Mayo and to call on the people in general to join in the demonstration.

Another decision taken by the CGT executive committee was to hold a meeting with the governors of Peronist-ruled provinces to discuss means of overcoming the economic crises which have put the provinces on the brink of bankruptcy.

And finally, the committee also decided to call on Congress for early debate on the government bills on profesional associations, workers social welfare funds and health insurance.

CGT Secretary-General Saul Ubaldini called Labour Minister Ideler Tonelli to advise him of the request of meeting with Alfonsin as a final bid to find a peaceful solution to the socio-economic crisis, and later sent him a copy of the telegram sent to Alfonsin asking for the meeting.

The telegram told Alfonsin that the CGT wanted to discuss the workers' extremely serious problems in the light of the crisis and the need to adopt urgent measures as no solutions had been found in other government areas.

The executive committee was scheduled to meet again this afternoon to assess the result of a meeting at the Labour Ministry this morning of the national council on, minimum wages.

The sources said the CGT would ratify its demands for a minimum wage for April of 780 australs and that this be brought up to date every 60 days.

Ubaldini told newsmen that the CGT was forced to declare a state of alert and mobilization because of the very serious socio-economic situation.

He reiterated that Alfonsin was asked for an audience because the areas of the government which were supposed to find solutions to the socio-economic situation had not come up with any thing positive.

Ubaldini said the CGT had also expressed its solidarity with the construction workers union because they had not had their social welfare fund returned to them.

He said the decision to meet with Peronist governors was due to the need to tell them that the rights of the workers and the sources of labour had to be safeguarded by the federal government which should provide the necessary revenue-sharing funds for the provincial governments to meet their commitments. (NA)

Government Group Impedes Operation of UK Firms

PY231518 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1345 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 23 Mar (NA)—Today reliable sources revealed that, in light of the British military maneuvers on the Malvinas Islands, the National Committee for the Control of British Assets in Argentina [Comision Nacional de Vigilancia de los Bienes Britanicos] has virtually suspended permission for normal operations to nearly 100 British companies controlled by the Argentine Government since 1982.

According to the sources, by the end of the month the Argentine Foreign Ministry will answer a petition by Peronist bloc deputies requesting a report on the amount of money remitted abroad by those companies [words indistinct] 1982 and on these companies' fixed assets.

The goods of British subjects who do not reside in Argentina was declared unavailable [indesponibles] on 18 May 1981 by Law No 22,591 as a consequence of the Malvinas conflict and to prevent the flight of British captial from the country.

The sources indicated that since 11 February, when the "Fire Focus" military excercises were announced, the National Committee for the Control of British Assets in Argentina has been "studying requests for normal operations, such as the renewal of permission to operate the vehicle fleet of a company, but has not been granting authorizations."

They said the committee—which is made up of officials of the Presidency and of the Ministries of Foreign Relations, Defense, Economy, Justice, Interior, and Public Works and Services—is "one more instrument for exerting pressure being used in the Argentine diplomatic strategy" to resolve the conflict.

Regarding the questions asked by Peronist Deputy Ruben Cardozo to Foreign Minister Dante Caputo during the questioning in the Chamber of Deputies on 9 March about the amount of money taken abroad, they added that a report is being prepared based on the annual balance that all companies must submit every year.

They added that "the money sent abroad was made under certain conditions and under the categories of profits, royalties, and salaries for technical assistance, and it never surpassed 10 percent of a company's assets."

The committee has inspectors in 92 enterprises, 12 insurance companies, and 2 banks.

The government apparently knows the exact amount sent abroad, which varied from about $100,000 a year for a large enterprise to 7,000 australes in the case of another company.

Asked if the British ranches in the Patagonia belong to the British royal family, they said "we are not aware of it."

Senator Comments on Flight Near Falklands

PY231601 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1242 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 23 Mar (NA)— UCR Senator Antonio Berhongaray today revealed that the Argentine Navy airplane in which a group of legislators overflew an area near the Malvinas last Monday picked up a radio message between two alleged British pilots, a message that well could have been a "sham operation" conducted by British intelligence from the Malvinas Islands.

Nevertheless, the chairman of the Senate Defense Committee categorically denied press reports that the Navy "Electra" airplane had been threatened by British fighters.

In comments to NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS, the Senator said that "one must not raise the profile" of the event because "we did not see any threatening British airplane, and our airplane's crew did not see anything, either."

Berhongaray thus denied press reports that the "Electra" airplane on which several legislators overflew an area near the Malvinas had "received a threatening warning from a British Phantom airplane."

Berhongaray, who is the chairman of the Senate Defense Committee, explained that "only a conversation between British people was picked up, a conversation that could well have been fabricated at the control tower in the Malvinas Islands."

He added: "This is quite common in these cases," insisting that "we did not see any Phantom airplane threatening us." [passage omitted]

Berhongaray also referred to a meeting he and [UCR Chamber of Deputies Defense Committee Chairman Balbino] Zubiri held with the Air Force leadership. At that meeting future Air Force programs were discussed in detail.

Berhongaray said that at the meeting the chairman of the Senate Defense Committee and the chairman of the Chamber of Deputies Defense Committee received a detailed report on the Schematic Program To Restructure the Air Force [Plan Esquematico de Reestructuracion de la Fuerza Aerea] (PERFA 2000).

Berhongaray said this program includes "the new locations for the Air Force brigades within the framework of the so-called 'safe-borders' doctrine."

"The Air Force is keeping in mind the 'safe-borders' doctrine, and for this reason it will remove the Moron and El Palomar bases, and only Ezeiza Air Force Base will remain in the Buenos Aires area," he said.

Berhongaray said the removal of these bases will involve the sale of the real estate and with the proceeds of the sale the Air Force expects to revamp its operations." [quotation marks as received]

Bomb Damages Police Facility in Buenos Aires

PY231401 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1328 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 23 Mar (NA)—A bomb exploded early this morning in the former clandestine detention center known as Automotores Orletti, where a police facility now operates. There was some damage but no casualties.

The explosion occurred at 0315 at 109 Lacarra Street in the Floresta District, where the Federal Police Auto Division has a parking garage and repair shop.

The explosion destroyed the front door, but there were no casualties.

A clandestine detention center known as Automotores Orletti operated on that site during the military government. According to the courts, many people who were arrested illegally were held there.

Bolivia

Relocated Miners 'Cooperating' With Traffickers

PY231413 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 1130 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] There is a risk that relocated miners who are cooperating with drug traffickers in coca growing areas might be turned into paramilitary armed groups at the service of those criminals. This opinion was voiced by Deputy Antonio Vargas, chairman of the Constitution, Justice, and Judiciary Police Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

Deputy Vargas noted he has received information that the relocated miners are already cooperating with drug traffickers as foremen and bodyguards in the zones where drugs are processed. He added that this expansion of the mafia represents a serious problem for law enforcement officers, since the miners are intelligent and politically organized.

Chile

Ruling Banning PCCh Leader's Entry Upheld

PY231418 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] The Supreme Court has upheld a Santiago appellate court ruling and rejected a petition filed for PCCh leader Luis Guastavino. The Supreme Court decision was unanimous.

Thus, the Supreme Court upheld a ruling passed by the lower court on 9 February 1988.

The appellate court had rejected a petition for protection asking that Guastavino not be banned from entering the country.

Colombia

Missile Fired at U.S. Embassy, Damages Windows

PA240302 Paris AFP in Spanish 0233 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] Bogota, 23 Mar (AFP)—A rocket was fired at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota tonight. The rocket apparently did not cause any casualties, although it damaged the windows of the building, located in a busy sector of this city.

The police, who cordoned off the site, have confirmed that the attack was perpetrated with a bazooka, which was found a short distance from the embassy. This is a strong building with an iron fence and sophisticated security systems.

According to first eyewitness accounts, two people fired the weapon and fled from the place quickly.

The explosion, which was heard several streets away, caused considerable damage mostly to nearby buildings' windows.

The embassy's security system had been reinforced after an attack with a car bomb in front of the building on 26 November 1984, which killed a passerby and injured two others.

At that time, drug-trafficking rings claimed responsibility for the action.

Guerrilla Group Claims Attack

PA240525 Paris AFP in Spanish 0441 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] Bogota, 23 Mar (AFP)—The "Omar Torrijos-"guerrilla commando of the America Battalion, which comprises several Latin American subversive movements, this evening claimed credit for the attack on the U.S. Embassy in Bogota, police have reported.

Colombia's M-19 left a leaflet at the attack site. In the leaflet, the M-19, which forms part of the continental subversive organization, claimed credit for the attack, the authorities announced without giving further details of the message's text.

The rocket was fired at the U.S. diplomatic mission from a taxi and caused no injuries but broke windows in nearby buildings.

According to some witnesses, the attack was carried out by three people traveling in a taxi. A wreath was left a few meters away from the embassy, located in a busy section of north Bogota.

An embassy spokesman has announced that U.S. Ambassador Charles Gillespie is not in Colombia, and the building was not damaged.

Unofficial sources have linked the attack to the U.S. Government attitude against Panama.

Police Searching for Attackers

PA241418 Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 24 Mar 88

[Text] The clandestine Omar Torrijos terrorist commando [words indistinct] battalion made up of members of the M-19 and other subversive groups, has claimed responsibility for last night's attack on the U.S. Embassy offices in Bogota. At 1915 last night [words indistinct] of the building, which houses the U.S. diplomatic mission. There was only property damage.

At the time of the attack, U.S. Ambassador Charles Gillespie was not in his office. He had left on his private plane to Washington to receive a report on the state council's decision [words indistinct] extradition that the Justice Ministry dictated against the members of the Medellin cartel, especially against Pablo Escobar Gaviria.

Following the attack on the U.S. Embassy, the police deployed special units to identify and capture the terrorists. The search has not yet been successful.

In November 1984, the same U.S. Embassy was the target of a car-bomb. One person was killed and [word indistinct] injured.

Social Conservative, 25 Others Killed

PA231525 Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Bogota—A Social Conservative Party chamber representative, 1 civilian, 2 soldiers, 2 peasants, and at least 20 alleged guerrillas were killed in the last few hours in various regions of Colombia. This is the partial result of the violence striking the country.

The police reported that last night two men and one woman apparently [words indistinct] to the Army of National Liberation [ELN] intercepted chamber representative Alvaro Arevalo Ferrero as he was about to enter his house in Ocana municipality, Norte de Santander Department. Arevalo was shot at least five times and died immediately.

It was also reported that in Puerto Colombia jurisdiction, Zaragoza municipality, Antioquia Department, one noncommissioned officer and one soldier belonging to the Army's 11th Brigade died in clashes with a [words indistinct] belonging to FARC.

Similarly, alleged ELN guerrillas killed peasants Francisco Mesa Victoria, Hugo Mesa, Dionisio Ramirez, and an unidentified 26-year-old man in San Antonio municipality, [name indistinct] Department.

Foreign Ministry Studying Paraguay Asylum Case

PY232049 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2002 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Bogota, 23 Mar (EFE)—Today the Colombian Foreign Ministry has been informed by its ambassador to Paraguay, Vicente Martinez Emiliani, that former Captain Napoleon Ortigoza has sought refuge in the Colombian Embassy in Paraguay. The Foreign Ministry is "studying Ortigoza's situation."

A Colombian Foreign Ministry source told EFE that Foreign Minister Julio Londono held a telephone conversation with Ambassador Martinez, who gave a detailed account of Ortigoza's entry to the Colombian Embassy in Paraguay.

Ortigoza, who is considered the longest-held political prisoner in Latin America, was liberated from his mother's home in Asuncion, where he was under house arrest after having served 25 years in prison.

The source told EFE that "the Colombian Foreign Ministry is studying and analyzing the procedures to be followed in this case."

The spokesman did not say whether the former Paraguayan officer—charged with murdering a lieutenant [as received] in 1962—has requested political asylum.

Ecuador

Vice President Begins Trip to Far East

PA231348 Quito Radio Quito in Spanish 2300 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Today Ecuadoran Vice President Blasco Penaherrera Padilla traveled to China to participate in several events dealing with trade relations. The vice president will be out of the country until 2 April. During his trip, he will be visiting Taiwan and other Far East locations. Congress President Jorge Zavala Baquerizo will be in charge of the vice presidency during Penaherrera Padilla's absence.

Paraguay

Shots Fired, Ortigoza at Colombian Embassy

PY231720 Asuncion Radio Primero de Marzo in Spanish 1659 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] We will now repeat a news item received by our press room.

Approximately 45 minutes ago Mrs Solange Saguier reported that her husband, Hermes Rafael Saguier, a leader of the Authentic Liberal Radical Party, had telephoned to tell her that he was at the Colombian Embassy in the company of Captain Napoleon Ortigoza.

According to Mrs Saguier, her husband told her that they had been able to get through the police guard and that the guards shot at them, but they were not wounded.

It is presumed that Capt Ortigoza will ask the Colombian Embassy for political asylum. It is possible he chose that embassy because it is located close to his home, according to Mrs Saguier's report.

Saguier's Wife on Incident

py232042 Asuncion Radio Primero de Marzo in Spanish 1930 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Inteview with Solange Saguir, wife of Hermes Abdon Saguier, Authentic Liberal Radical Party leader, with unidentified reporter; place not given—live; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Saguier] ...it referred to the remarks made by the prosecutor reporting that he was free. (?Ortigoza) then decided to leave his house. He walked a few meters and the policemen who were guarding his home pushed him inside and said that he was not free, that he was still under arrest. He [Ortigoza] insisted that this could not be true, and told them to look at the newspapers. Don't you read the newspapers? The policeman said: No, the newspapers may say you are free, but you are under arrest on orders from above. The events which are already known to the people later took place.

[Reporter] Were there shots? [Name indistinct] told us this afternoon that there were shots. Was anyone wounded? Was there...

[Saguier, interrupting] No, no one was injured. Ortigoza struggled with the captain who attempted to prevent him from getting into the car, but, as my husband started the car, he (?pulled) strongly [words indistinct] and freed himself. After that, the policemen shot at the car, but fortunately no bullets hit the [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Did the police shoot in the air or directly at the car?

[Saguier] At the car.

[Reporter] At the car?

[Saguier] Yes, at the car.

[Reporter] Who were the policemen? Those who were guarding Captain Ortigoza's home?

[Saguier] Yes, those who were guarding Capt Ortigoza's home.

[Reporter] Your husband is at the [Colombian] residence, right? When will he leave the place?

[Saguier] My husband is simply accompanying Capt Ortigoza until the latter's situation is defined. As soon as the problem is resolved, my husband will leave the residence normally.

[Reporter] What was the Colombian ambassador's answer to the request for asylum?

[Saguier] The ambassador is trying to grant Napoleon Ortigoza's wish, which is to be free. According to the ambassador, he is in contact with the Colombian Foreign Ministry and is waiting for orders.

[Reporter] It has been said that currently Ortigoza is a refugee at the embassy.

[Saguier] Yes, for the time being Ortigoza is a refugee, and the ambassador is waiting for his government's decision on the matter.

[Reporter] Was Dr Saguier visiting Capt Ortigoza by chance or had they planned it previously?

[Saguier] No, I believe they are in permanent contact because my husband's brother, Miguel Abdon Saguier, is Ortigoza's lawyer and Celino Amarillo is also Ortigoza's lawyer. Therefore, they were in permanent contact with Ortigoza and his family.

[Reporter] Has Capt Ortigoza really decided to seek asylum?

[Saguier] Yes, of course. When I visited him at the embassy, Ortigoza said he was calm because he recalled that in 1968 Colombia had voted in favor of his release at the OAS. This fact gave him a certain tranquillity regarding the Colombian Government.

[Reporter] Were Ortigoza's relatives in the house?

[Saguier] I do not know, I have no information on that.

[Reporter] You know nothing about that then. Very well, thank you very much, Mrs Saguier.

[Saguier] You are welcome.

Colombian Envoy Comments

PY232045 Asuncion Primero de Marzo in Spanish 1915 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Telephone interview with Colombian Ambassador to Paraguay Vicente Martinez Emiliani by unidentified Primero de Marzo reporter—live]

[Text] [Reporter] Good afternoon, Ambassador Martinez Emiliani, how are you?

[Martinez] Very well, thank you.

[Reporter] We are phoning you to inquire about some of the details of the Napoleon Ortigoza case, if you dont mind.

[Martinez] What do you want to know?

[Reporter] What can you tell us about him? Has he already been granted political asylum

[Martinez] No, he arrived at the embassy requesting status as a refugee right now.

[Reporter] Is he there right now?

[Martinez] Yes, he is there as a refugee.

[Reporter] Is that the embassy's point of view?

[Martinez] Yes. Political asylum has to be granted by the Colombian Government once it has studied the case.

[Reporter] Has he requested asylum, Ambassador?

[Martinez] Yes, he has requested asylum.

[Reporter] Is he the only one who has requested asylum?

[Martinez] Yes.

[Reporter] Is Dr Saguier still at your residence?

[Martinez] Yes, but he is only accompanying Ortigoza.

[Reporter] He is only accompanying him?

[Martinez] Correct.

[Reporter] Are you going to begin taking the necessary steps?

[Martinez] Excuse me?

[Reporter] Are you going to begin taking the necessary steps?

[Martinez] Yes, of course.

[Reporter] What is the procedure to be followed, Ambassador?

[Martinez] I simply have to make the request for asylum and then inform the government of the country, in this case the Paraguayan Government, that this request has been made. We also have to make the request to the country where the person is seeking asylum, in this case Colombia. Colombia then has to study the case and determine what type of crime has been committed and then answer whether it will grant asylum or not. That is the procedure.

[Reporter] How long does that take?

[Martinez] There is no specific time.

[Reporter] Is the local foreign ministry informed about the request immediately?

[Martinez] Of course, it is done immediately.

[Reporter] By telephone?

[Martinez] No. [Words indistinct] all communications are made as soon as possible, but they must be made in writing, naturally.

[Reporter] Ambassador, I want to ask you something else. One of my colleagues is posted in front of your home and did not see you leave. [Reporter] Miguel Angel, Ambassador Martinez Emiliani can hear you.

[Miguel Angel] We have been here for some time now with a large group group of journalists as you may have seen for yourself. I would like to ask you whether Napoleon Ortigoza is in your residence or at the embassy, and where exactly is the embassy located?

[Martinez] The Colombian chancery is located on 2240 Mariscal Lopez Avenue and the Colombian residence on 572 Capitan Brizuela.

[Reporter] Of course, that is where you are now, Miguel Angel.

[Miguel Angel] And where is Captain Napoleon Ortigoza?

[Martinez] He is at the residence.

[Miguel Angel] Thank you, that is what we were wondering. We saw a red vehicle leaving the residence. Did you leave in it?

[Martinez] Yes, that is right. The problem is that my vehicle is being repaired. The red vehicle was lent to me by a friend.

[Miguel Angel] I see.

[Reporter] That makes sense because we described your vehicle to Miguel Angel and he could not find it.

[Martinez] You are not going to find it because it is being repaired.

[Reporter] Ambassador, how did things happen? Is there anything...

[Martinez, interrupting] I do not know because I was not there when everything happened. I did not go to Mr Ortigoza's home nor to Mr Saguier's home or anything of the sort, so I do not know what happened.

[Reporter] Did he make any charges when he arrived at the residence?

[Martinez] They arrived at the residence and requested political asylum. Mr Ortigoza requested asylum; that is all.

[Reporter] Where there any incidents?

[Martinez] Excuse me?

[Reporter] Were any incidents registered?

[Martinez] No, none.

[Reporter] None at all?

[Martinez] No, no, not that I know of.

[Reporter] Your house is guarded now, I believe.

[Martinez] It is always guarded. I think security has been tightened somewhat now.

[Reporter] Someone told me that some shots had been fired in the vicinity.

[Martinez] No. I have no information about that because I was at the chancery, which is far away from the residence. I know nothing about that nor did I witness anything.

[Reporter] Do you hold talks with Minister Saldivar of someone else?

[Martinez] No, I hold them with Minister Saldivar, who is here.

[Reporter] I see.

[Martinez] He came back yesterday.

[Reporter] Very well. Thank you, Mr Ambassador.

Foreign Ministry Communique

PY241158 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 24 Mar 88 p 8

[Text] At approximately 2000 last night, the Foreign Ministry released an official communique that states: "This afternoon the Colombian Embassy in Asuncion reported to the Foreign Ministry that Modesto Napoleon Ortigoza arrived at the Colombian ambassador's residence, accompanied by Dr Hermes Rafael Saguier, and verbally asked for diplomatic asylum.+

"The Foreign Ministry told the Colombian Embassy that Modesto Napoleon Ortigoza was convicted of the murder of Cadet Alberto Anastacio Benitez, a crime committed within military jurisdiction. For this crime he had received a death sentence, recorded as No 4 of 22 July 1963, in compliance with Article 203 of the Military Penal Code. This sentence was later commuted to 25 years imprisonment, which he has already served. Hence, he is free."

Envoy Denies Ortigoza Daughter at Embassy

PY240032 Asuncion Radio Caritas in Spanish 2357 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Telephone interview with Spanish Ambassador Eduardo Serra by unidentified reporter—live]

[Excerpt] [Reporter] Mr Ambassador, EFE has reported that Mirta Ortigoza, a daughter of Captain Napoleon Ortigoza, has sought asylum at the Spanish Embassy. As you know, her father sought asylum at the Colombian Embassy this afternoon. Could you confirm this report?

[Serra] No. I have to deny the report because I have been informed of today's events. I want to say that I know Mirta Ortigoza and that I have talked with her on several occasions. As you know, the Spanish Government has offered—and this offer still stands—Capt Ortigoza to come to live in Spain and obtain asylum there.

Capt Ortigoza's daughter is not at the Spanish Embassy. If she were here, this fact would not mean anything either because she is a free Paraguayan citizen who, I am sure, has complete freedom of movement. If she would like to have a drink at my residence, I would offer it to her with great pleasure, but I assure you that she is not here and that no asylum request has been made because there is no reason for her to request asylum anewhere. [passage omitted]

Peru

Army Accused of Rights Violations in Sion

PA232337 Paris AFP in Spanish 1550 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Text] Lima, 23 Mar (AFP)—Opposition Deputy Gustavo Espinoza charged today in Lima that approximately 30 people were killed, several people are missing, and some women were raped in the town of Sion on 27 February, during a military operation against narcoterrorists.

Espinoza, a member of the United Left—the chief opposition bloc at the Assembly—made his accusation at the Defense Ministry and to Attorney General Hugo Denegri. Espinoza based his accusation on personal investigations in that region, located in the Amazonian Department of San Martin, approximately 650 km to the northeast. [as received]

Approximately 50 soldiers, reinforced with antirebel police, arrived in Sion on 27 February in five helicopters. This town is located near the city of Juanjui. The coca mafias and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement guerrillas have turned this city into their bastion.

Espinoza, a member of the Chamber of Deputies' Human Rights Commission, added to his accusation that innocent people with no ties to the mafias or the guerrillas are included among the victims and missing persons.

Emilton Morales Pinedo, a 20-year-old youth who has never been linked to any illegal activities, was one of those killed. Espinoza said Sion Mayor Luis Castaneda Caballero is still missing almost 1 month after the military operation. He also said some pregnant women were among those raped. Deputy Espinoza demanded an investigation and said that so far military authorities have not given any official information on the matter.

Uruguay

Sanguinetti Comments on Talks With Gorbachev

PY231354 Montevideo Radio Carve in Spanish 0930 GMT 23 Mar 88

[By a "special correspondent" from Moscow]

[Excerpts] The most important event of the official visit of President Julio Maria Sanguinetti here in Moscow was his meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev for about 2 hours.

The two leaders held an open talk on international issues and the Latin American situation. Sanguinetti said it was good for him and for Uruguay to meet with the leader of the Soviet Union and get first hand information on Soviet-U.S. relations as well as issues such as disarmament, the Central America situation, and the new stage the Soviet Union is experiencing through perestroyka. [passage omitted]

At the conclusion of his talks with Mikhail Gorbachev, Julio Maria Sanguinetti commented on the meeting:

[Begin recording] [Sanguinetti] We held a cordial and frank meeting on various issues. It was a very important meeting for Uruguay because Uruguay should be involved in dialogues with the statesmen who are building our world. The events that occur in the United States and the Soviet Union do not only affect those two

countries; those events also affect our daily lives. I believe this is the real message conveyed by Gorbachev through the vision he has of the world.

He is always insisting on that point of view because he feels the great responsibility of what is occuring in the Soviet Union, because he feels it is influencing the entire world. We talked about the development of the Soviet Union, about perestroyka, what it means, how it is being implememted, and the problems it is facing.

We then held a long talk on international issues. I was interested in knowing Gorbachev's views on the prospects for an agreement with the U.S. Government. We talked a great deal about this issue. We also talked about other issues, the main international problems, basically those in areas of conflict. I tried to get his impression on the issue of disarmament—and this is an issue that affects us because it is necessary not only to achieve peace but also to achieve prosperity. You see, even if there is no war, the Soviet Union and the United States are using their immense wealth and potential in the arms race, and this situation prevents prosperity and a more balanced development of the world. I would say there is an awareness [words indistinct].

From the Uruguayan Government point of view, I believe it was a very interesting meeting, not because we found out new things about Gorbachev's thinking, which is quite consistent with the things we read about him, but because we got more precise information about the current situation, which brings us up to date on how things are going.

[Reporter] Does Gorbachev understand the Uruguayan position that in order for the Latin American democracies to conslidate their institutions they urgently need economic support?

[Sanguinetti] The important thing is that I believe he is aware of that, that he knows our position [words indistinct], which is clearly within the international spectrum. He also receives direct information about Uruguay from Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, who told me he has good memories of Uruguay, especially of its people, and that he was very impressed by the people. Shevardnadze has made reference to this on several occasions. [end recording]

National Party Leadership Names President

PY231649 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 23 Mar 88

[Excerpt] This morning the executive board of the National Party held an important meeting at the Legislative Palace. The board elected Roberto Rubio, who is the representative of the Movement for the Fatherland, as the new party president. [passage omitted]